



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Walla Walla District

Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Draft Feasibility Report/ Environmental Impact Statement

MAR 24 2000

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers invites any person who has an interest in the Draft FR/EIS or represents a group of people that have an interest in the subject matter of this study, to make comments. The Corps will respond to the comments related to their Draft FR/EIS in their next NEPA document produced for the Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Report/EIS. Comments will be accepted through March 31, 2000.

Name: *Giselle Wiederhielm*

Organization: *Columbia Basin Development League*

Comments: *The Corps found that with existing dam conditions, the average survival rate through all four dams and reservoirs on the Snake River for juvenile salmon is over 80%, and for adult salmon is 88-94%. There is no concrete verifiable biological or scientific data to prove the removing of even one inch of these dams would restore salmon runs.*

Resident fish & wildlife would be subjected to higher water temperature along with 50 to 75 million cubic yards of eroding sediment traveling down the river.

The air would have increased dust emissions from replacing hydroelectric power with natural gas & barging with highway & rail traffic. This traffic would greatly increase annual pollution and safety concern.

Send comments by

E-mail: salmonstudy@usace.army.mil

Fax: (509) 527-7832

Mail: Department of the Army, Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers, Attention: Lower Snake River Study, 201 North Third Avenue, Walla Walla, Washington 99362-1876

See page (3) (3)



P.2

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ASSOCIATION POLICY STATEMENTS

State Salmon Recovery Strategy

The State of Washington must take the lead in developing and implementing a recovery strategy for salmonid species listed as threatened or endangered under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act. The absence of a state plan that would allow the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the federal courts to assume unilateral control of Washington's natural resources is unacceptable. The plan must balance the recovery of the species while maintaining the economic vitality of the region.

The burden and cost of salmon recovery should be fairly distributed with all interests contributing to the actions necessary to effect restoration of the resource. Willingness to take action is based on the sense that no single interest is being asked to bear a disproportionate share of the load.

Entities, such as irrigation districts, having direct, on-the-ground, responsibility to manage water resources should play a significant role in reviewing the workability, practicability and potential for success of any elements of a salmon recovery strategy. Recovery actions should be scientifically grounded with a high probability of achieving the desired effect. All beneficial uses of the State's water resources should be treated equally under the provisions of the recovery plan.

Flow Targets on the Columbia River

N.B. The annual quantity of water allocated to Columbia River flow augmentation should be reduced to 4 million acre feet or less and serious consideration should be given to utilizing this water only for late summer and/or early fall flow augmentation. There is significant evidence that spring and early summer flow augmentation is not providing any biological benefit.

Flow Targets on the Snake River

N.B. The annual quantity of water allocated to Snake River flow augmentation should not exceed the current 427,000-acre feet. Serious consideration should be given to utilizing this water only for late summer and/or early fall flow augmentation. There is significant evidence that spring and early summer flow augmentation is not providing any biological benefit.

Reclamation's Moratorium on Columbia River Appropriations

The Bureau of Reclamation's administrative moratorium enforced on the Columbia Basin Project and elsewhere in the region that prohibits the use of already certificated and permitted water to serve additional agricultural, municipal/industrial and other project water uses already authorized by existing contractual authorities should be ended. The need for that moratorium is based on excessive flow augmentation allocations that are hydrologically unachievable and biologically unnecessary.

P. 3

Statement on Water Efficiency Incentives

Public policy should change to provide positive incentives to accelerate improvements in water use efficiency by all water user categories. This includes a need to modify relinquishment provisions (use to or lose it). Saved water should be available for future use within the water user category achieving the improved efficiency. Removing the threat of loss and providing opportunities for growth through improved efficiency will lessen the competition for existing water and reduce the demand for new water. Over time, instream flow will benefit.

Commitment to Water Quality

Irrigation districts are committed to meeting applicable state and federal water quality standards for the benefit of the landowners they serve and for the benefit of the multiple uses of water resources of which irrigated agriculture is an integral part. Throughout the State of Washington, irrigation districts are developing water quality programs to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

- In the Yakima River Basin, the Roza-Sunnyside Board of Joint Control (RSBOJC) has established water quality objectives to match the Total Maximum Daily Loading (TMDL) goals that have been set for the lower Yakima River.
- The RSBOJC is measuring 11 different water quality parameters to establish baseline data in an effort to determine the effectiveness of water conservation and water quality improvement projects.
- The RSBOJC has adopted policies to improve water quality through a combination of policies, programs and projects.
- The three Columbia Basin Project irrigation districts have expanded water quality monitoring programs to add to existing baseline data.
- The Kittitas Reclamation District is collecting water quality data in anticipation of TMDL goal setting in the Kittitas Valley.
- The Lake Chelan Reclamation District has been providing technical assistance to irrigators for six years through an innovative irrigation water management program. The program helps growers use irrigation water more efficiently while minimizing both runoff and deep percolation.
- The Lake Chelan Reclamation District has monitored agricultural drains in the District for both trends and characterization since 1995. Monitoring included a wide variety of compounds, pesticides, herbicides and pollutants. A study was completed in 1998 comparing monitoring results with state standards and TMDL's.
- New irrigation technology, both on-farm and in conveyance systems, is reducing agricultural water runoff.

Statement on Snake River Dam Removal and John Day Reservoir Drawdown

The destruction of the Snake River dams and the natural river drawdown of John Day reservoir should not be given further consideration. The biological uncertainty of these actions coupled with the combination of high direct implementation costs and great societal costs of foregone irrigation, navigation, hydropower and divisiveness of these proposals detract from the region's ability to focus on achievable salmon recovery measures.

Why not build a canal for the fish around the dam?

February 18, 2000.

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Lillian L. Wiedenhielm. I am 69 years old. In the early 50's my husband & I pioneered our farm units 15-16 in Block 70. Actually, we started with Unit 16, Block 70, Grant County. Later, so we could get a circle irrigation system we bought Unit 15, Block 70 Grant County. My husband & I did divorce. I kept Unit 16, as my share of our assets. I have been working very hard to keep it going. For health reasons, I lease it out. However, I attend as many meetings as I can. I am a member of the Columbia Basin Development League - try to keep up with farm policies and developments. I cannot believe

what you are threatening
to do to us farmers. Please
do not forget the impact this
would have on the future existing
farmers of this country.

I was 21 years old when
Earle took me to see this farm
Unit 16, Block 70, Grant County,
Washington. I was so excited about being
a farmer & a pioneer. We had
to burn the sage brush, get
rid of rock after rock so we
could get the ground ready for
a crop. We had a hand move
irrigation system to handle
the much needed water from
the Columbia Basin project
coming from Coulee Dam. We
visited the Grand Coulee Dam
and looked at the miracle that
had occurred, yea a miracle. Our
land was a sage brush desert.
Now we could grow crops.

My farm is my retirement plan. It is also very much my pride & joy. I was born in Canada on a big farm. My Dad had to use horses to do his work on the farm. I went to school with a horse & buggy. I remember when Dad got his 1st tractor and other machinery. Those were all miracles. I remember reading by oil lamps because we did not have electricity. I remember our 1st radio, 1st electric light system. What a miracle!

Each & every dam in our State of Washington is a miracle. Where there is desert, now there is a crop. I love salmon & I have gone to Salmon Arm, B.C. & watched the salmon return. That is a miracle. We need perhaps to create canals for the salmon along side the dams. Wouldn't that be a possibility? I am sure that would be better for all of us. Also, we need to do a better

job of protecting the banks
 along the river where development
 is destroying Salmon habitat.
 What about soil banks?
 What about Gill Nets?
 What about Ocean Temperature?
 What about Salmon depletion where
 there are no dams?
 What about Idaho poisoning sock eye
 salmon and replacing it with rainbow trout?
 What about the hatcheries?
 What about the 200 mile covenant for
 foreigners? Should we increase it?
 What about Sports Fishing on?
 Is there too much salmon being killed?
 What about the slaughter?
 What about Caspian turns?

My father invited the Indians
 to stay with us annually on our
 lands. Each year they would return
 & I cherish my friendships as a child
 playing with their children. I respect
 the Indians. I think the treaties
 are important. I listened to the
 Indian's comments. I did not
 hear proof that the dams are
 the cause of salmon declining.

I do believe that we need to work together for a solution and improvement. I believe flow targeting of the Snake River should occur.

The annual quantity of water allocated to Snake River flow augmentation should not exceed the current 427,000 acre feet.

For Columbia River flow augmentation should be reduced to 4 million acre feet. As use and serious consideration should be given to utilizing this water only for late summer or early fall flow augmentation, there is significant evidence that spring & early summer flow augmentation is not providing any biological benefit for Snake River or Columbia river.

The destruction of the Snake River Dam and the natural river drawdown of John Day reservoir should not be given further consideration. The biological uncertainty of these actions coupled with the combination of high direct implementation costs and great societal costs offorgone

irrigation, navigation, hydropower
and divisiveness of these proposals
detract from the regions ability
to focus on achievable salmon
recovery measures.

Our share of P.V.D is toward
Salmon Recovery? (a portion of it)
Is it fair to eliminate the
farmer? I don't believe so.
What about hydropower?
What about the loss?

1-8- 250,000 homes

What about recreational activity
What about flood control? River level?

Portland & Davenport would be
threatened I believe.

What about transportation?
I cannot believe what I heard
regarding transportation. Can you
imagine replacing the shipping
on barges to trucks & railroad
cars? What a disaster!

What are we doing, here?
The farmers are already stressed
out. What are you doing?

Please, figure out ways
to help the farmers. The
economy for farmers is
terrible. Now, you want
to take away the chore of
their existence, the water
they need to water their
crops.

I cannot believe that
anyone with intelligence
and a heart would come
to this conclusion.

Help the farmer & the
salmon. Build a passageway
for the salmon, if you have
too, but don't destroy the
farm community to save the
salmon.

Save our dams.

Sincerely,

Liselle Wedderburn
12023-7th Ave. N.W.
Seattle, Washington
98177

Phone 206-362-6063
206-979-0667

P.S.
I attended
the Pusey meeting
from 12-7 PM.